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Second edition

Reviews by  
the Editorial Board of *Reference Books Bulletin*  
Revised Introduction by Sandy Whiteley

American Library Association  
*Chicago and London 1988*

Cover designed by Bernie Kagel

Composed from disk on XyWrite III Plus  
software in Times Roman on a  
PS Jet+ laser printer

Printed on 50-pound Glatfelter,  
a pH-neutral stock, by  
Patterson Printing  
Bound in 10-point Carolina cover  
stock by Patterson Printing



#### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

American Library Association. Reference Books Bulletin Editorial Board.  
Purchasing an encyclopedia.

Rev. ed. of: Purchasing an encyclopedia / American Library Association,  
Reference and Subscription Books Review Committee. 1979.

1. Encyclopedias and dictionaries—Book reviews. I. American Library  
Association. Reference and Subscription Books Review Committee.  
Purchasing an encyclopedia. II. Title.

AE1.A48 1988 031 88-2187  
ISBN 0-8389-3351-3

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Printed in the United States of America

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*Reference Books Bulletin*  
Editorial Board 1986-1987

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Guest Reviewers: Douglas G. Birdsall; Winifred F. Dean; Ruth M. Hadlow; and James R. Rettig.

## Introduction

The first so-called encyclopedic work in English, Sir Thomas Elyot's *Boke of the Gouernour* (1531), was intended to "render superfluous the need to consult any other books." Today's encyclopedia publishers set themselves somewhat more modest goals. *Collier's Encyclopedia*, for instance, attempts to present a "scholarly, systematic, continuously revised summary of the knowledge that is most significant to mankind," while the *Academic American Encyclopedia* states as its aim "to make accessible to a particular audience definitive information on the broadest possible range of subjects." *World Book* endeavors to present "information from the vast reservoir of knowledge in the most accessible and usable form." *Merit Students Encyclopedia* gives as its goal to "meet the educational and informational demands brought about by changes in our society and our schools." "To provide the inquiring mind with accurate information told in an interesting style, and thus lead into broader fields of knowledge" is the goal of *Compton's Encyclopedia*. And according to *Funk & Wagnalls New Encyclopedia*, the basic task of an encyclopedia is "to mirror fully and fairly the state of the world for its audience."

The contemporary encyclopedia continues to be a repository of information. In addition to answering factual questions, an encyclopedia provides an introduction to and overview of many topics, usually accompanied by reading lists that lead to further information. While all sets use illustrations to illuminate the text, an encyclopedia may particularly stress the visual. The *Academic American Encyclopedia* and *The*



*New Book of Knowledge* are two outstanding examples of this. Some sets are designed specifically to answer curriculum-related reference needs of students: *World Book*, for instance. Some encyclopedias include practical information, such as the article explaining the gears on a ten-speed bike in *Compton's*, while other sets, such as *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, cover strictly academic material.

When choosing an encyclopedia, the most critical factor is selecting a set that is appropriate to the age level of the potential users. Often families want to buy a set for elementary school children that will take them through high school and college, and so they choose one of the adult sets, hoping their children will grow into it. By the time the children are ready to use the set, it will already be outdated. Meanwhile, the children may become discouraged from trying to use a set that is written at too advanced a level. When buying an encyclopedia for an elementary-age child, it is much better to select one written specifically for younger readers. The child will be more likely to use the set and develop the habit of using reference books. Also, young children are not able to go to the public library on their own, and families in which both parents work may especially appreciate having a set in the home.

Families with older children will also find an encyclopedia a worthwhile purchase. While high school students may be able to go to the library independently, they will be grateful for a set at home when they start an assignment late at night or at other times when the library is closed. Finally, though it is often the presence of children in the home that motivates adults to purchase an encyclopedia, it is a useful resource for adults as well. In addition to helping parents answer their children's questions, a good encyclopedia will provide background information for other books the parents are reading or television programs they are watching, help resolve informal debates with other adults, and even help with puzzles and games. The adult who works at home will find an encyclopedia very useful.

But for both children and adults, encyclopedias serve more than just education- or work-related purposes. A good encyclopedia inevitably encourages browsing and can serve as recreational reading. Columnist Bob Greene reminisced in the March 5, 1986, *Chicago Tribune* about his use of an encyclopedia as a child: "On days when there was not much to do, I would sometimes pick out a volume at random, and just go through it until I found a subject that appealed to me. Then I would read up on that subject until the end of the encyclopedia's entry—and then I would go on to another subject. And it wasn't boring. . . . It was

as if the world was contained in those 26 volumes, and any time I felt like it I could jump headlong into that world and come out with something I never knew about before." He concludes by saying, "I still find myself using the encyclopedia."

The 10 multivolume general encyclopedias on the market today can be identified as being written for the following age groups: (1) those intended for seven- through fourteen-year-old readers—*The New Book of Knowledge*; (2) those aimed at children about nine or ten through young adult—*Compton's Encyclopedia*, *Merit Students Encyclopedia*, *New Standard Encyclopedia*, and *World Book Encyclopedia* (with some articles or parts of articles written at the adult level); (3) relatively smaller sets appropriate both for young adults and adults—*Academic American Encyclopedia* and *Funk & Wagnalls New Encyclopedia*; and (4) large, comprehensive sets for high school students and adults—*Collier's Encyclopedia*, *The Encyclopedia Americana*, and *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*. All the sets for young people have some material that is useful for adults as well. In some cases, articles in a children's set may be a better introduction for some adults to a very sophisticated topic than those in an adult encyclopedia. For instance, an adult with no science background may find the explanations of black holes or supernovas in a children's set easier to comprehend.

## Points to Consider before Purchase

After narrowing down the field based on the appropriateness of the sets for the intended age group, there are 12 criteria that can be used in evaluating an encyclopedia. These are authority, arrangement, subject coverage, accuracy, objectivity, recency, quality, style, bibliographies, illustrations, physical format, and special attributes. Some may be of more concern to potential buyers than others, depending upon the circumstances in which the encyclopedia will be used. Each characteristic is briefly explained below. Prospective purchasers should visit their local public library and compare encyclopedias, looking up topics on which they are already knowledgeable, to assess the relative strengths of the sets.

**Authority.** Authority derives from the credentials of contributors and editors and the general reputation of the publisher. While distinguished contributors may be listed as the authors of articles, editorial policy determines what information to include in an encyclopedia, as well as the format in which information will appear. Potential pur-



chasers of an encyclopedia should look at the listed credentials of both its editorial staff and its contributors (usually found in either the first or the last volume of the set) and note their experience and education.

*Arrangement.* All the encyclopedias reviewed here are arranged alphabetically, either word by word or letter by letter. (For example, a word-by-word arrangement is ice cream, ice hockey, iceboating, Iceland. A letter-by-letter arrangement is iceboating, ice cream, ice hockey, Iceland.) A word-by-word arrangement is easier for most readers to use. The advent of computer composition has, however, caused many publishers to adopt a letter-by-letter alphabetical arrangement. It is helpful, especially for younger readers, if the alphabet is divided so that all of one letter (or all of a combination of letters) is in one volume.

To assist readers in finding related information, encyclopedias employ various kinds of internal guidance systems, such as indexes, cross-references, and tables of contents and boxed summaries at the beginnings of articles. These last two items are especially important in encyclopedias to be used by students. A detailed analytical index is particularly helpful in drawing together information that may be scattered throughout the set. Artists, for example, may have articles of their own but may also be discussed in broader articles on painting or sculpture. To test an encyclopedia's guidance system, pick four or five topics and see how the various keys lead to related information. To compare ease of use, the same topics should be looked up in similar encyclopedias.

*Subject Coverage.* To determine appropriateness of subject coverage, a reader must consider the type and range of topics included in an encyclopedia, the relative space allotted to various subjects, and the point of view of the editors. Are "hot" topics and contemporary issues covered or only those items that have been proven by the passage of time to be significant increments to the cultural heritage? Does the allocation of space to various subjects meet the purchaser's requirements? A purchaser interested in having at hand information on practical topics such as careers or nutrition, for example, would find an encyclopedia that gives most of its space to strictly academic topics to be of less use.

Typically, encyclopedias covering the major areas of knowledge will devote approximately half of the total text to geography and the pure and applied sciences. The arts, language, music, literature, philosophy, and religion will take approximately a third of the space, with the social sciences, history, education, sports, and miscellaneous information accounting for the rest. Encyclopedias for children will, of course,

devote more attention to such topics as pets, hobbies, and handicrafts than will adult encyclopedias.

*Accuracy.* Readers often take for granted that information in an encyclopedia is accurate, but this should never be assumed. Encyclopedias sometimes derive their information from sources that may not be error-free. Outdated statistics, faulty biographical information, and erroneous dates can be found in all encyclopedias. These errors usually arise in cases where there is a difference of opinion on a particular fact as reported in the literature. Generally, however, editors take special care to make articles as accurate as possible, and all copy goes through a lengthy checking procedure. Before investing in an encyclopedia, prospective buyers should inspect topics with which they are familiar to see if articles on them are precise and accurate.

*Objectivity.* Space limitations in general encyclopedias make representation of all legitimate views on controversial topics (e.g., abortion, evolution, socialism) an impossibility. Readers therefore depend on the editorial judgment of encyclopedia editors for which conflicting views to include and at what length. The presence of racial and sexual biases should also be investigated. Attempts to counter racial bias in encyclopedias have included adding biographies of nonwhite persons and articles on minority history and civil rights, revising accounts of slavery, and eliminating denigrating language. Similar steps have been taken to eliminate sexual bias; however, it lingers on in some sets. The reader should be wary of the stereotyping of women, overuse of the pronoun *he*, and single-gender characterizations of various vocations, e.g., exclusively male airline pilots and brain surgeons or female secretaries and nurses. Encyclopedias that have revised their texts on these topics may still be using older photographs that stereotype occupations.

More difficult to spot in an encyclopedia is bias within coverage of particular subjects. That articles are signed by subject experts or noted authorities may imply objectivity, but in some encyclopedias articles may be only based on an article submitted by the designated author, or the signature at the end of an entry may only signify that the person read and approved an article written by editorial staff. Consumers should examine specific articles in an encyclopedia to see to what extent opposing doctrines are given fair and balanced consideration. Encyclopedias are written to sell to the widest possible audience, and therefore most articles represent mainstream thinking. Users looking for articles that propound unorthodox views on health, for instance, will not find them in these sets.



*Recency.* There are facts that do not "date." Much of the information on the humanities—art, music, philosophy—does not change dramatically over time. However, population statistics, elections, important scientific breakthroughs, deaths, and sports records are among the many topics on which out-of-date information is misleading. The fact that the encyclopedias reviewed here all undergo an annual revision does not mean that *all* facts are updated. All encyclopedia editors have a page budget that limits the number of pages they are able to change in any one revision. The number of pages of text that have changes made on them in any one year ranges from 5 percent to 25 percent, with most sets making changes on about 10 percent of the pages. Before investing in an encyclopedia, a would-be purchaser should check the currency of information on topics with which he or she is familiar.

*Quality.* Items that determine the quality of individual articles in an encyclopedia include many of the characteristics discussed under other headings here. Another factor, however, is the length of articles. While an encyclopedia that attempts to convey the world of knowledge in specific 200-word segments may be serviceable, it is unlikely to provide enough background and may seem patronizing to the older student or adult. The length of articles should vary with the importance and complexity of the subject. Encyclopedias differ in the degree to which they present information on specific topics or subsume material on related topics into broad articles. *Academic American Encyclopedia*, for instance, tends to have articles on specific subjects. *Collier's*, on the other hand, has longer articles on broader topics. *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* uses both approaches, with long articles on broad topics in the *Macropaedia* and shorter articles on narrower topics in the *Micropaedia*. None of these procedures is necessarily better than the others; each appeals to some individuals.

Within each article, data should be presented in logical fashion without ambiguity or oversimplification. The information selected for inclusion should be relevant to the needs of the encyclopedia's intended users. For instance, biographies should provide substantive summaries of important persons' lives, focusing on concepts and contributions rather than on dates and degrees. The treatment of such complex topics as the Middle East, civil rights, or nuclear energy will help indicate the quality of the encyclopedia as a whole.

*Style.* The hallmarks of effective encyclopedia style are coherence, simplicity, and directness. Moreover, the language should be appropriate to the subject and to the encyclopedia's intended audience.

Publishers of encyclopedias for children sometimes use controlled vocabularies or test the reading level of their articles using various readability formulas in order to guarantee that children will be able to comprehend them. In sets for all age levels, technical and advanced terms should be defined when they first appear. Difficult topics should be introduced gradually and with sufficient explanation, so that they do not confuse or overwhelm the reader. Even though the subject matter of an encyclopedia is largely factual, the reader is entitled to language that is lively. In addition to providing information, an encyclopedia article should be a pleasure to read.

*Bibliographies.* Many encyclopedias include with their articles bibliographies or lists of suggested readings as guides to further study. Lists of books, magazines, films, or other items that are grouped on the basis of difficulty are particularly useful. The works listed should be current, relevant, and generally available to the encyclopedia's audience. They should appear at the ends of articles instead of being segregated in a separate volume. For all encyclopedias except those intended for very young children, bibliographies are essential. Teachers sometimes discourage students from using encyclopedias because they suspect that students rely too much on them when writing term papers, but the encyclopedia provides an excellent introduction to the term-paper topic. Ideally, an encyclopedia article will provide an overview of the subject, and its bibliography will provide titles of materials that will lead to further research.

*Illustrations.* Art reproductions, drawings, maps, portraits, photographs, diagrams, and other graphics are a stimulating, informative, and often instructional component of encyclopedias. In assessing the quality of an encyclopedia's illustrations, a prospective buyer should determine whether the illustrations are clear, pertinent, informative, and pleasing and whether they are placed in proper relation to the treatments of the subjects they depict. If the pictures are in color, their tones should be close to those of what they depict. The size of the illustrations should be appropriate to their subject matter; fresco paintings, for instance, should not be reduced to the size of postage stamps. Captions should be complete enough to preclude confusion or ambiguity. Art reproductions, for example, should be identified at least with the titles of works and names of artists. Portraits of living subjects should be recent; old photographs are too often supplied for contemporary figures, and they may confuse readers about the true age of persons. The use of color illustrations can enhance the attractiveness of an encyclopedia, especially if the material is well integrated with black-and-



white or two-tone photographs, and encyclopedia publishers are increasingly using more color. Some sets are printed on four-color presses, which means that color can appear on any page. Some publishers still print only selected signatures or sections on a four-color press, which means the decision of where to use color is partially determined by where the article appears in the set. Since children are more dependent on illustrations for meaning than adults, those trying to choose a set for children should pay special attention to them.

*Physical Format.* The binding, typography, and design of an encyclopedia are also important. First, the buyer should notice whether the encyclopedia is durably and attractively bound. Is the binding strong enough in relation to the size and weight of the volumes? Some encyclopedias have more than one binding available at different prices. For home use, the most inexpensive binding should be suitable. Are letters and numbers on the spine easily visible? Test a volume to see whether it lies flat when opened. The centers of double-page maps and illustrations should not disappear into the binding. The binding should be washable. The paper should be opaque so that the print on one side of a page does not bleed through on the reverse. Since a glossy paper can tire the eyes, a matte or semigloss finish is preferable. The type should be clear and legible. A variety of sizes and spacing should be used to avoid monotony. Consumers should look for a set that is inviting to read as well as physically durable.

*Special Attributes.* Some encyclopedias have extra features, such as reference services, separate atlases, dictionaries, or other materials, sold as part of a package that are intended to lure hesitant buyers. Consumers should weigh very carefully the added value of such features and not let their presence distract them from assessing the encyclopedia's main objectives and quality.

## Other Facts about Encyclopedias

All encyclopedia publishers also issue a yearbook, except for *New Standard*, which publishes a quarterly supplement. These yearbooks were last reviewed in *Booklist/Reference Books Bulletin*, September 1, 1985. *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* contains cross-references to its yearbook, the *Britannica Book of the Year/Britannica World Data*. It is the only yearbook in which the material is in any way integrated with the body of the encyclopedia. The other yearbooks, while useful sources of current information, are not related to their parent sets in ar-

rangement. In fact, some publishers use the same yearbook to update several different sets, and others contract out the preparation of their yearbook to other encyclopedia publishers.

Encyclopedias have been published in alternate formats, such as braille, large print, and "talking book." Today some encyclopedias are available in electronic forms, either as an online database or on optical disc, such as videodisc or CD-ROM. These media enable readers to search the set by keyword and thus are more intensively indexed than the printed set, but they do not have the capability of including the illustrations from the encyclopedia with the text. With the further development of an optical disc technology that is able to reproduce illustrations and sound along with text, we may see encyclopedias in this form in libraries and homes in the not-too-distant future.

Librarians sometimes ask if the American Library Association has a policy on the frequency with which libraries should replace their encyclopedias. ALA does not have such a policy. However, a survey by Kenneth Kister, reported in *Library Journal* (April 15, 1979, p.893), found that public libraries replaced their encyclopedias every five years, and in some cases, more often. Consumers considering purchase of a used encyclopedia should buy a set that is five years old or less. An older set should be avoided, especially if it is to be used by children.

## Encyclopedia Reviews

*Purchasing an Encyclopedia* is a revision of a 1979 ALA publication with the same name that reviewed 20 general encyclopedias. Since that time, nine of them have gone out of print. Another two, *The Lincoln Library* and *The Volume Library*, are published in only one or two volumes and therefore are not comparable to the 17- to 30-volume sets reviewed here. In addition to the nine sets from the 1979 pamphlet that are reviewed again, a new set first published in 1980, the *Academic American Encyclopedia*, has been added. These 10 sets are all published in the U.S. and revised annually. The following reviews were written by practicing librarians, all of them either members of the *Reference Books Bulletin* Editorial Board or guest reviewers, and originally appeared in the November 1, 1987, issue of *Booklist/Reference Books Bulletin*. The editions reviewed are all 1987 sets. The reviews are arranged alphabetically and stress the degree to which the sets have been updated since the previous year. For further information, most reviews carry a reference to a more extended review published in



*Booklist/RBB*. A table can also be found on page 40 that compares the sets on the basis of size and price.

The 1988 editions of all these sets will be reviewed in the October 15, 1988, issue of *Booklist/RBB*. Both *New Standard Encyclopedia* and *World Book* have promised major revisions in their 1988 sets, and *World Book* has been entirely reset in a new typeface. Britannica has announced a new 20-volume set, *Children's Britannica*, for children in grades three to eight to debut in 1988.

The American Library Association plans to issue a revision of this pamphlet every two years. Readers needing more information on encyclopedias may want to consult one of the following books, which may be available in libraries:

*Best Encyclopedias: A Guide to General and Specialized Encyclopedias* by Kenneth F. Kister. Oryx Press, 1986. \$39.50 (0-89774-171-4).

In addition to reviewing the 10 encyclopedias discussed here, Kister also reviews 42 other sets, some of them out of print and others in one volume. Appendixes give brief comments on specialized subject encyclopedias and foreign-language encyclopedias.

*General Reference Books for Adults* (Bowker Buying Guides Series). Bowker, 1988. \$69.95 (0-8352-2393-0).

Reviews nearly 300 in-print encyclopedias, dictionaries, and atlases for adults.

*Reference Books for Young Readers* (Bowker Buying Guide Series). Bowker, 1988. \$49.95 (0-8352-2366-3).

Evaluates encyclopedias, dictionaries, and atlases for children.

## Encyclopedia Reviews

**Academic American encyclopedia.** 21v. [Bernard S. Cayne, editorial director; K. Anne Ranson, editor in chief.] Grolier Inc., Sherman Turnpike, Danbury, CT 06816. 1987. (last full review in *RSBR*, July 1, 1981)

*Academic American Encyclopedia* (AAE) is the most recently developed set being reviewed here, having appeared first in 1980 as the product of an American subsidiary of a Dutch publishing conglomerate. AAE was the first encyclopedia to apply modern computer technology to all aspects of the planning, editorial, revision, and production processes. It presents, in specific entries, a broad spectrum of up-to-date information to meet the needs of adults and students from high school through college and presents this information accurately, objectively, and concisely. Grolier Incorporated, the largest U.S.-based publisher and distributor of encyclopedias and reference books worldwide, now owns the set outright and also markets a consumer edition under the name *Lexicon Universal Encyclopedia*. This has a less sturdy binding and is not intended for use in schools and libraries. Since this publisher has been involved with AAE, the encyclopedia has been thoroughly revised to reflect contemporary scholarship, attitudes, and concerns and has continued to excel in the quantity and quality of illustrative material. Because of its relatively recent creation date and constant and thorough revision process, AAE continues to be one of the most up-to-date encyclopedias published anywhere in the world.



AAE is one of the smallest encyclopedias reviewed here in terms of number of pages but one of the largest in terms of number of entries, outranked only by *The Encyclopedia Americana* and *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*. This means that AAE's articles are short; on the average, there are three to a page. AAE has information on a larger number of topics than many encyclopedias, but the entries are often limited to fact with little room for analysis. For example, AAE has biographical entries on people of current interest not found in other encyclopedias, e.g., Alistair Cooke, Garry Wills. However, articles on countries of the world are often only one-third to one-half as long as those found in other adult encyclopedias.

As the name *Academic American* implies, the editors of AAE attempt to reflect the curricula of American schools and colleges when determining the content of the set. As new developments in educational practices and interests are discovered, the set is updated to reflect them. Since the 1986 edition, 135 new articles have been added, 229 entries have been replaced or extensively revised, and 1,279 articles have received minor revision, resulting in more than 1,100 pages of textual change. While this represents slightly less than the average amount of revision for the last few years, it does equal 10 percent of the pages and is indicative of the extensive editorial review that AAE undergoes each year.

For the 1987 edition, the editors have concentrated on updating the information on computer and video technology. All of the articles relating to these two topics have been revised and expanded, and new entries have been made for the appropriate new technologies and techniques, such as *Compact Disc* and *Video Camera*. In addition to updating these two, new articles have been added for such diverse topics of current interest as *African National Congress*, *Chernobyl*, *Greenpeace*, *Literary Modernism*, *Privatization*, and *Superstring Theories*. Approximately 35 percent of all entries are biographical. New biographees for 1987 include Corazon Aquino, Jerry Falwell, Larry Holmes, Lee Iacocca, Antonin Scalia, and Harold Washington. Like all the biographical entries, they are not extensive but are brief and intended only to convey the basic facts.

Fifty-five articles have been completely rewritten for the 1987 edition. They are due primarily to recent political events (*Nicaragua*, *Uganda*, and *Vietnam*); new developments in science and technology (*Artificial Intelligence*, *Electronic Music*, and *Quantum Mechanics*); and the need for updating in biographies for individuals such as P. W.

Botha, Eugene O'Neill, and Muammar al-Qaddafi. Of the articles that have received a major revision since the 1986 edition, most have been updated to cover current events. Examples of these entries include *Drug Abuse*; *Gay Activism*; *Gorbachev, Mikhail*; *Israel*; *Reagan, Ronald*; *South Africa*; and *Statue of Liberty*. Most of the minor revisions are of a statistical nature and involve the addition or revision of statistical tables and annual events. The 1987 edition includes information as recent as the November 1986 election results and even a brief mention of the Iran-contra arms scandal in the article *Reagan, Ronald*.

AAE strives to remain free of political or social biases. Articles on potentially controversial topics such as *Apartheid*, *Creationism*, *Fundamentalism*, and *Homosexuality* are written in an objective and informative manner and present the basic facts of the subject without introducing opinions. Almost one-half of all entries have attached bibliographies. Although most of the bibliographies are brief (from one to five entries), they usually cite very recent publications. The majority of all articles are signed, with the authors' credentials listed in the first volume.

Another area in which AAE excels is the quantity and quality of the illustrations. The 16,500 illustrations occupy approximately one-third of the space of the encyclopedia. More than 75 percent of the illustrations are in color, and the editors are as active in updating the illustrations as in revising the articles. More than 100 new illustrations appear in the 1987 AAE. Because of the relatively recent vintage of the set, it is not burdened by a legacy of outdated photographs and drawings.

The index of the work retains the same format as a detailed study guide, listing both broad and narrower subjects for each entry. Bibliographies, maps, and illustrations are all clearly indicated in the index.

AAE is the only encyclopedia available in three electronic formats as well as the printed version. The entire text of the encyclopedia may be accessed through online vendors, laser videodisc, or CD-ROM. In each case, the reader may use Boolean search techniques to retrieve the relevant sections of the encyclopedia. The illustrations are not available in the electronic formats, but Grolier is developing an adaptation of AAE on compact disc-interactive that will include color pictures and sound. They hope to release this new product in 1988.

*Academic American Encyclopedia* is the most current and up-to-date encyclopedia in the English language for high school, college, and adult readers. Conceptually it is very different from the other adult encyclopedias, with its emphasis on breadth of coverage rather than



depth. As long as Grolier maintains its aggressive revision and updating program of this unique set, it will remain one of the premier encyclopedias.

**Collier's encyclopedia:** with bibliography and index. 24v. William D. Halsey, editorial director; Bernard Johnston, editor in chief. Macmillan Educational Co., 866 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022. 1987. (last full review in *RBB*, September 1, 1983)

*Collier's Encyclopedia* traces its antecedents back to a one-volume 1882 compendium. The current 24-volume format was first published between 1949 and 1951 by the P. F. Collier Company. Now published by Macmillan, *Collier's* is revised and updated annually and has established an enviable reputation as a scholarly set for high school and college students, as well as adult readers. The articles in the arts, humanities, and social sciences are particularly outstanding. Over the years, *Collier's* has maintained a high level of accuracy and objectivity in a readable, well-designed format. Contributors are recognized authorities in their fields, and nearly all articles are signed. Editors, advisers, and contributors are listed at the front of volume 1, and brief credentials are given for each. There are 65 new contributors to this edition.

Although *Collier's* has favored broad area coverage rather than short articles, the trend in recent years has been to more specific article headings. There are 13,000 cross-references to link up these entries. A continuing strength of the set is the index in the last volume consisting of 400,000 entries. In addition to indexing the 25,000 articles, there is access to every title in the bibliography and all illustrations and maps. All geographic features and place-names are indexed in this volume. *Collier's* is the most intensively indexed of the encyclopedias reviewed here. Approximately 20 percent of *Collier's* space is devoted to illustrations, and about 10 percent of these are in color. There are 150 four-color maps by Rand McNally and 1,300 specialty maps; most are placed within or immediately adjacent to the related text.

In the 1987 edition, a total of 2,053 text pages has been revised (11 percent of the text pages), up from 1,828 pages last year. The 54 new articles in this edition include four that are more than three pages long: *Black Americans*, *Crystals and Crystallography*, *Hospital*, and *Latin American Literature*. The showpiece of this group is the impressive 26-page entry *Black Americans*, written by Thomas Holt of the University

of Michigan. This historical survey focuses on the economic, social, and legal position of the black community from the time of slavery to the present. The text is accompanied by 10 statistical tables and 21 well-chosen illustrations, e.g., a photograph of a 1930 lynching and pictures of prominent black Americans. Other new articles include *Death* (as an existential problem), *Free Will*, *Industrial Hazards*, *Needlepoint*, and *Popular Music*. Biographies account for half of the number of new articles; the longest entries are *Roman Jakobson*, *Sam Shepard*, and *Claude Simon*.

The 52 rewritten articles this year range from a major revamping and expansion of a topic to changes that are not as readily perceptible to the reader. For example, in the letter *B*, *Bacteria*, *Bioethics*, and *Bukharin, Nikolai* reflect expanded knowledge and new developments on their subjects, but there are only slight changes in the rewrites for *Basil* and *British Museum*. Rewritten articles on topics of current interest include *Asbestos* and *Fiber Optics*.

*Collier's* does an excellent job of updating information in existing entries; another 905 articles are updated in the 1987 edition. Many country and U.S. state articles have been revised, with special attention to current economic conditions, a particular strength of *Collier's*. Other examples of currency are an international exchange-rate table dated August 29, 1986; bowling champions and tournament winners for 1986; and the article formerly titled *Upper Volta* now under that country's new name, *Burkina Faso*. The short article *Poet Laureate* includes Robert Penn Warren, the first appointee to the newly established American position, and *Waldheim, Kurt* takes into account new evidence about his military career during World War II. On the negative side, *Collier's* makes no mention of the phenomenal success of compact discs in the sound recording industry.

An unusual aspect of *Collier's* has been its 11,500-item bibliography in the last volume of the set. There are no cross-references from articles in the set to the bibliography. It continues to be updated (56 pages were revised this year), but recent editions of *Collier's* have also added bibliographies to the ends of major new and rewritten articles. For example, *Black Americans* concludes with the author's annotated list of 29 books for further reading. Shorter articles may also cite major works on the subject, e.g., a 1985 definitive work is noted in the article *Poussin, Nicolas*, and a 1986 biography is referenced in *Rand, Ayn*. Some bibliographies, e.g., *Denmark*, single out those books appropriate for younger readers. This new policy seems to address concerns some readers have had with the separate bibliography format.



There are revisions in 49 of the four-color country and continent maps, and there are 158 new illustrations. Although some progress is made each year in improving the illustrations, including the addition of more color, *Collier's* graphics remain serviceable but undistinguished. Physically, *Collier's* is an attractive set, and its good-quality paper and uncluttered pages with wide columns and legible print are exemplary.

*Collier's Encyclopedia* is one of the largest and most prestigious adult general encyclopedias. Its size allows it to present analysis, not just facts. Its coverage is well balanced, its style readable and also literate, and its program for revision meritorious. It remains a worthy purchase for high school, college, and public libraries and for the home.

**Compton's encyclopedia and fact-index.** 26v. [Dale Good, editor.] Compton's Learning Co., div. of Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 310 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60604. 1987.

*Compton's Encyclopedia*, first published in 1922 as a home and school reference work for young people, was the first "pictured" encyclopedia. Today features offering guidance to young readers include a subject-area outline and a list of questions at the beginning of each volume, "Previews" (miniature tables of contents for longer articles), fact summaries and fact boxes, fact finders (lists of related articles), and bibliographies. Articles open with information that will catch the interest of children. For instance, the article *Eastman, George* begins "The man who transformed photography from a complicated and expensive chore into an inexpensive hobby for millions of people . . ." The set contains how-to-do-it articles on topics of interest to children, e.g., *Sewing*, attracting birds to your backyard in *Birds*. Another feature that *Compton's* pioneered is its "Fact-Index," which integrates with the index short entries on topics not found in the body of the set. Like *The New Book of Knowledge's* dictionary index, the "Fact-Index" is found at the end of each volume. However, unique to *Compton's*, these short entries are also found interfiled in the cumulative index volume. It is features like these that make *Compton's* appropriate for children from grade four through high school.

*Compton's* is unique among the encyclopedias reviewed here in that currently its major revision program concentrates on a few volumes each year instead of revising wherever it is needed throughout the set. Since this revision program began in 1982, an average of three volumes has been targeted for heavy revision each year with relatively minor

changes in other volumes. This year the letters *E*, *G*, *Q*, and *T* were extensively revised.

The 1987 edition contains about 4,300 articles, of which 229 are new, 430 are rewritten, and 107 are revised, in addition to new maps, photographs, and other artwork. Changes were made on about 13 percent of all text pages. New articles in the 1987 edition include *Electronic Games*, *Exercise*, *Genocide*, *Graphic Arts*, *Quark*, *Quantum Theory*, and *Telecommunication*. Prominent articles that have been rewritten and updated with new illustrations or charts include *El Salvador*, *Electricity*, *England*, *Eye*, *Tennis*, *Television*, and *Turkey*. New biographical articles include those for Corazon Aquino, Muammar al-Qaddafi, and Ferdinand Marcos. The article *Libya* has been revised to include the U.S. air strike, and *Nuclear Energy* has been updated to include the Chernobyl accident. In general, the information and accompanying illustrations in the new and revised articles are excellent.

The "Fact-Index" now contains approximately 60,000 entries. The capsule entries range from 15 to 100 words. Other biographical entries have been added to the "Fact-Index"; they include those for Judy Blume, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and Christa McAuliffe. *Compton's* has been criticized for avoiding controversial topics. There is a good, brief entry for AIDS in the "Fact-Index." However, the definition added this year to the entry *Homosexual* will not be of help to young people: "person who is inclined toward or practices homosexual behavior." As volumes are revised, references to articles in the "Fact-Index" from the body of the volume are being removed. This incomplete format change can be frustrating for the reader and the librarian, especially when an assignment involves bibliographic instruction to an entire class.

As articles are updated, their bibliographies are also revised, eliminating most out-of-print titles published before 1980. In addition to those appended to new and rewritten articles, this year another 11 bibliographies were revised. *Compton's* contains about 22,500 illustrations, making up about one-third of its page space. In general, about 35 percent of them are four-color and 35 percent are two-color. More than 700 illustrations were added to the 1987 edition. These new photographs and drawings do much to improve the appearance of the encyclopedia. A list of editorial staff, consultants, advisers, and contributors is located in the first volume. In general, only articles three pages or longer are signed. Cross-references continue to be incorporated into new articles.

For those volumes that have not yet been reached in the revision cycle, our criticism of earlier years still stands. Zimbabwe is still cov-



ered under *Rhodesia*, for instance, and the outdated articles *Shoes* and *Street Railway* are unchanged. Some of the volumes revised earlier in the cycle are ready for further revision. For instance, the bibliography accompanying *Black Americans* contains nothing more recent than 1974, and most of the books listed are from the 1960s. *Compton's* has recently doubled the pace of its revision program, raising the percentage of pages revised each year to about 25 percent. The Board recommends that *Compton's* return to its policy of continuous revision throughout the set so that more consistency can be achieved.

We hope that *Compton's* will soon be able to fully achieve the potential shown in the revised parts of the set. It is a readable encyclopedia containing many well-organized, concise, and profusely illustrated articles. At the present time, *Compton's* is an adequate supplemental source for children from upper elementary levels through high school.

**The encyclopedia Americana.** International ed. 30v. [Bernard S. Cayne, editorial director; David T. Holland, editor in chief.] Grolier Inc., Sherman Turnpike, Danbury, CT 06816. 1987. (last full review in *RBB*, December 1, 1983)

The 1987 edition of *The Encyclopedia Americana* has been designated by Grolier as the "U.S. Constitutional Bicentennial Commemorative Edition"—that legend being embossed on the binding. In addition to the full text of the Constitution, *Americana* contains more than 200 articles that provide information on the Constitution. *Americana*, the first multivolume encyclopedia published in the U.S. (1829-1933), is noted especially for providing information on American history, biography, and geography. Its coverage of scientific and technical topics and separate articles on famous works of art, music, and literature have earned it reknown as well. While authorities and scholars are commissioned to write the articles (more than half are signed), the clear writing is understandable to the nonspecialized reader and appropriate for adults and older students.

The scope, purpose, and format of the encyclopedia have not changed with the 1987 edition. The number of articles (52,000) and pages remains the same as the previous year, but the revision process has changed or added information on more than 1,000 pages of text. According to the editors, the revision program this year has concentrated on expanding some major scientific subjects, particularly

those relating to the nuclear age, and updating information on the U.S., Canada, and several other countries.

Most of the 42 completely new subjects introduced are biographies. Included are Corazon and Benigno Aquino, new Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, and Polish Communist chief Wojciech Jaruzelski as well as figures from the arts, sports, and other areas. Noted women are well represented, among them animal behaviorist Jane Goodall, writers Lorraine Hansberry and Alice Walker, and Chinese author Ding Ling. One hundred thirty-one articles have been completely replaced or have received major revision. The new science articles *Nuclear Medicine*, *Nuclear Regulatory Commission*, and *Nuclear War* provide up-to-date information on these important topics. Most of the sections in *Nuclear Energy* also are new and include coverage of the disaster at Chernobyl. Other scientific articles replaced include *Uranus* (incorporating new information from the space probe) and *Extinct and Endangered Species*.

*Americana* is noted for its coverage of Canadian topics, some of which received major attention this year. The articles *Canada*, *Calgary*, and *Alberta* were replaced or revised and freshly illustrated. Latin America was also a focus of the revision program. Major portions of the articles *Chile* and *Brazil* have been revised or replaced; in addition there is a totally new *Colombia* article. Replacement articles like this are completely rewritten, often by a different scholar who introduces new information throughout, not just updating recent political events. In *Colombia*, for example, demographic and other statistics have been revised and recent political events and social issues such as the drug trade discussed; the arts section now mentions Nobel Prize-winner Gabriel García Márquez; and the economic problems caused by Andean deforestation are treated. The dull black-and-white photos have been replaced by beautiful color shots.

In addition to major changes, almost 400 minor revisions were made in text and illustration. All articles on the states of the U.S. were revised to some extent, particularly in economics, government, and current affairs. New records and championships are reflected in major sports articles; prizewinners for 1986 were added to *Academy Awards*, *Nobel Prizes*, and *Literature for Children*.

The numerous minor revisions made each year in the main set keep articles timely between major overhauls or rewrites. There is a certain amount of unevenness in how this is accomplished. For instance, the controversy over Kurt Waldheim's election in Austria in June 1986 is noted, Chernenko's biography is revised to reflect his death in March 1985, and most deaths of significant people seem to be promptly re-



corded in the entries. However, the ouster last year of Duvalier is not mentioned in the article *Haiti*. Distinguished African leader Julius Nyerere stepped down from the presidency in Tanzania after 23 years, but this fact is not reflected in his biography and is only alluded to as a possible future event in *Tanzania*. In general, although the *Ethiopia* piece received needed updating, African topics seem to need some attention. More than half the articles on African countries include no events since 1980 in the text. There has been another change of government in Uganda and a coup in Lesotho since their pieces were updated. While Africa and Zaire are touched on briefly in the *AIDS* article, no mention of the devastating effects of that disease appears in the section on health in *Africa* or in the *Zaire* article. This uneven revising can be seen elsewhere: the political struggles of the Sikhs and related violence in India are duly recognized in that country's article but not mentioned at all in the article *Sikhs*. A positive sign is seen in the effort to update bibliographies; in addition to updating bibliographies in the articles that received major revision, those of 558 additional articles have more current material added.

*Americana* is expanding the use of four-color illustration. The articles *Colombia*, *Brazil*, *Chile*, parts of *Mexico*, and *Alberta* are freshly illustrated with many striking new color photographs. Similarly, entries on art in *Egypt* and *India* benefit from this part of the revision process. The Board hopes other faded, dated color photographs in the rest of the set will soon be brightened. As noted in last year's review, the black-and-white photographs are often dark; in addition, many are badly cropped, with the tops of heads, towers, and artworks lopped off.

Access to the contents of an encyclopedia is provided through cross-references and a good index. While not extensive, there are *see* and *see also* references in the text of this set; tables of contents at the start of long articles are another useful feature. The arrangement of *Americana*'s analytic index is effective and clearly explained in its preface, and the number of entries is impressive.

The *Encyclopedia Americana* continues to live up to its long-standing reputation as a comprehensive, authoritative set for high school students and adults. The minor weaknesses pointed out here do not detract from its tradition of excellence and its suitability as an encyclopedia for home or library use.

**Funk & Wagnalls new encyclopedia.** 29v. Leon L. Bram, editorial director; Norma H. Dickey, editor in chief. Funk & Wagnalls, Inc., 70

Hilltop Rd., Ramsey, NJ 07446. 1987 (© 1986). (last full review in *RBB*, December 15, 1983)

*Funk & Wagnalls New Encyclopedia* was first published in 1912 as *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Encyclopedia*. In 1971 it took its new name and began a continuous revision policy. Since the major overhaul of the set in 1983, revisions at each fall and spring printing have added a total of 129 new articles, and changes have been made on more than 7,800 pages, including the index volume. This set is unique in that its method of distribution is through supermarkets on "book-a-week" programs. Schools and libraries can acquire it only from the publisher. Designed to meet the information needs of junior and senior high school students and adults, its 25,000 articles are accurate, well illustrated, and easy to read.

The set is in 28 text volumes with the index in volume 29. Lettering on the spine is sometimes confusing. There are 10 cases where the same five letters end a volume and then begin the next, e.g., volume 1 ends with *AMERI* and volume 2 begins with the same letters. Thirty-five percent of the illustrations are in color. The paper is not glossy, so color illustrations are not spectacular but are pleasing. Illustrations are sometimes bled to the edges or into the gutters, and margins are narrow. Rebinding could be a problem, but the set is sturdily bound.

Instructions for using the set are found in all volumes—a four-page guide in volume 1 and a one-page condensation in all other volumes. The bibliographies are printed in the last half of volume 28 rather than at the end of individual entries. While the main access to them is from references at the end of 2,000 major articles, which refer one to a specific section, there is also a two-page guide to explain the use of the bibliographies.

Articles in *F&WNE* range from brief identifications of a few lines to many pages; the average article is less than two pages. Among the 13 new articles this year are *Microcomputer*; *Parvovirus*; *Sweetener*, *Artificial*; and *Telecommunications*. As before, room has been made for them by condensing articles nearby, by omitting illustrations, or by bleeding them to the edges or cropping them. New biographies include those for Corazon and Benigno Aquino, Benoit Mandelbrot, and Antonin Scalia. (The *Philippines* article also mentions Benigno's murder in 1983 and Corazon's rise to president in 1986 and includes a new color illustration, "Counting the votes in Manila in 1986.") Articles on Warren Burger, William Rehnquist, and the Supreme Court have been updated, and there is a photograph of the new Rehnquist court. Six arti-



cles have been rewritten, e.g., *Computer* (a major rewrite that also changed four of five illustrations and a diagram), *Population*, and *Nietzsche, Friedrich*. (This last refers to a bibliography in the last volume but none was found there.) The bibliography section was extensively revised last year; the Board did not note any changes this year.

There have been revisions of about 100 articles. Twenty-nine articles on national literatures include new authors and titles; articles on literary forms (*Detective Story*, *Science Fiction*) have been updated, as have several articles on art and architecture, including American, Canadian, and modern. All states and Canadian provinces have had their economy sections updated both in the text and in tables and charts. Many foreign countries have had their exchange rates revised.

Some 50 maps were changed, including *Alaska* and *Time Zones*. The plates for *Flags of the World* were replaced, adding 13 new countries and changing flags for 5 countries. Many illustrations were changed for cities, mostly for the better (with *Denver* and *San Antonio* being particularly good). Tables of sports events and prizes have been updated; strangely, the list of Indianapolis Speedway winners (under *Automobile Racing*) still ends with 1984. Death dates in 1986 were inserted for Simone de Beauvoir, Jorge Luis Borges, James Cagney, Benny Goodman, Tenzing Norkay, and Georgia O'Keeffe, among others. *Terrorism, International* has a new illustration; Muammar al-Qaddafi's biography mentions the U.S. bombing in April 1986 in retaliation for terrorist attacks; *Libya* also shows this. The entry for Kurt Waldheim mentions his winning the presidency of Austria in 1986 but does not mention the furor over allegations of his Nazi past. The article *Haiti* mentions the flight into exile of Duvalier. *Portugal*, in addition to having its exchange rate updated, includes the return of Soares to its presidency in 1986 and its entry into the European Community. The Chernobyl nuclear disaster is mentioned under both *Energy Supply*, *World* and *Nuclear Energy*. The 1986 return of Halley's comet is mentioned under *Comet*, and there is a color photograph of it. *Women's Rights* has been revised to include Geraldine Ferraro's vice-presidential candidacy and 1986 Supreme Court rulings; it also has a new color illustration. *Deep Sea Exploration* has a new color picture but does not mention the finding of the *Titanic* and the pictures taken of it, nor does the article *Titanic Disaster*. Under *Cocaine*, no mention is made of increasing deaths; the article still states, "Death from overdose occurs rarely." The Reykjavik summit meeting is noted in both the U.S. and USSR articles. The return of the Senate to Democratic control in No-

vember 1986 and the Iran-contra scandal are the last items in the *United States of America* article.

More pages were changed this year than any year before (2,970, or almost 25 percent of the text pages). Many of these changes were small, but they did a great deal to keep the set current, and the addition of 73 full-color illustrations makes it more lively and pleasing to the eye.

*Funk & Wagnalls New Encyclopedia* is not as scholarly and comprehensive as the largest encyclopedias, but it presents information on people, places, and things in a straightforward manner; covers all fields of knowledge; and remains quite current. For its audience of older children and nonspecialist adults, it provides excellent value for the money. It is also a practical purchase for libraries.

**Merit students encyclopedia.** 20v. William D. Halsey, editorial director; Bernard Johnston, editor in chief. Macmillan Educational Co., 866 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022. 1987. (last full review in *RBB*, September 15, 1983)

*Merit Students Encyclopedia* was first published in 1967 by Crowell-Collier Educational Corporation (now Macmillan Educational Company). It is intended to fulfill the curricular needs of students from fifth grade through secondary school and also to support their out-of-school activities by providing articles on topics such as sports, hobbies, and pets. *Merit* relies on advisory boards of prominent librarians from the U.S. and other countries and a board of special editors who wrote major articles for the encyclopedia and participated in its development. In addition to these boards, approximately 2,500 contributors and reviewers are listed with their credentials in the last volume of the set, although there is no indication there of the articles for which they are responsible. A few contributors are well known, including Isaac Asimov, CIA director William Webster, and *Village Voice* theater critic Eileen Blumenthal (who is new to this edition). Most articles are signed; asterisks next to more than four-fifths of the signatures indicate that the article was written by the editorial staff and the signer is vouching for its accuracy and completeness.

The 21,000 articles in the 20-volume encyclopedia are arranged alphabetically letter by letter (e.g., *Iceberg* before *Ice Hockey*); a 140,000-entry index is included in the last volume. *Merit* contains approximately 20,000 illustrations, occupying 25 percent of the page



space. Approximately 25 percent of these illustrations are in color, a fairly low percentage when compared with other encyclopedias aimed at young people.

Bibliographies of "Books for Further Study" accompany approximately 5 percent of the articles, including most of the country and all of the state articles. Some of the longer bibliographies, such as those accompanying *Computer* or *Anthropology*, contain separate sections for younger and advanced readers; undivided bibliographies often designate those books appropriate for younger readers.

In the past, *Merit* has consistently been praised for its accuracy and objectivity, especially in articles on controversial subjects such as *Homosexuality* or *Nuclear Testing*. Other critically acclaimed aspects of *Merit* include its use of interesting historical illustrations (e.g., a photograph of children in a sod house homestead in the article *Kansas*); color overlays, including one in the article *Greece, Ancient* that restores the ruins of the Parthenon to its former splendor; and charts and diagrams elucidating complex processes and structures, such as the series of diagrams showing the skeleton, muscles, internal organs, and circulatory system in the article *Frog*.

Many of *Merit's* black-and-white photographs are excellent, especially those of animals, and *Merit's* policy of continuous revision has resulted in generally current articles. Criticism has centered on *Merit's* use of dated photographs that tend to project the racial and sexual stereotypes of their period, blurred or faded color photographs, and uneven and sometimes outdated bibliographies.

The 1987 edition of *Merit* has no change in scope, format, arrangement, or intended audience. There are 31 new articles, 10 rewritten articles, and 281 updated or revised articles—a total of 541 revised pages representing 4.5 percent of the set's 12,300 pages. This is a low percentage of revision when compared with other sets discussed here. New articles, the length of which averages two paragraphs, include topics of headline interest, such as *Airspace*, *Dietary Fiber*, *Osteoporosis*, and *Supernova*, along with less timely topics, such as *Cerumen*, *Dew Point*, and *Red Tape*. Of the 10 rewritten articles, several, such as *Rehnquist*, *William*, *Tasadays*, and *Waldheim, Kurt*, reflect new developments or research. Of the revised articles, many were changed to note deaths (Cary Grant, Harold Macmillan), results of presidential elections (*Colombia*, *Costa Rica*), or new statistics (*Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome*). This edition of *Merit* includes only one new photograph; therefore, the previous criticism of *Merit's* illustrations is even more true for this edition.

None of the new articles contains lists of books for further reading, but 25 other bibliographies have been revised. The articles *Haiti*, *Honduras*, and *Horse* all list high percentages of books published in the 1980s. However, some articles on less-than-newsworthy topics and their accompanying bibliographies are still in need of updating. Examples include *Hairdressing*, which discusses hairstyles through the 1960s, refers to a Beatles' hairstyle in an illustration as "contemporary," and includes only one reference—to a 1956 book. The articles *Haiti*, *Libya*, and *Uranus* have all been updated to reflect current events, but the article on Julius Nyerere does not show that he is no longer president of Tanzania. The article *Sikhs* is outdated. There are no separate articles on Corazon Aquino or Christa McAuliffe, although student interest in these women is probably high. The article *Dinosaurs* does not note that the *Brontosaurus* is now known as *Apatosaurus*, though this fact is mentioned in *Brontosaur*.

The 1987 edition of *Merit Students Encyclopedia* is little changed from the previous edition. Essential facts and statistics have been updated, but there is a continuing need for examination and revision of photographs, articles that are less newsworthy but important to children (e.g., *Dinosaurs*), and bibliographies in order to retain the set's reputation for timeliness. It does continue to provide accurate, objective, reasonably well-illustrated information for upper elementary through high school students; many adults will also find the set useful.

**The new book of knowledge.** 21v. [Bernard S. Cayne, editorial director; Jean E. Reynolds, editor in chief.] Grolier Inc., Sherman Turnpike, Danbury, CT 06816. 1987. (last full review in *RBB*, March 15, 1988)

Grolier published the first edition of *The New Book of Knowledge (NBK)* in 1966. It was alphabetically arranged and replaced the very popular, topically arranged *Book of Knowledge* that had been much used by children between 1910 and 1966. *NBK* is the one encyclopedia reviewed here that is designed exclusively for younger children. It is organized to be especially useful in meeting children's curriculum and out-of-school needs for information. For example, the article *Book Reports and Reviews* will help the student preparing such an assignment for school. The articles on Emily Dickinson and the Brownings contain samples of their poems. The articles *Fables*, *Fairy Tales*, and *Legends* contain examples of each genre. For leisure-time use, *NBK* contains many articles on sports and hobbies with how-to-do-it in-



formation. See, for example, the articles on diving, rock collecting, various art projects, and diaries. The article *Recipes* even includes some easy-to-make examples for children. In addition, a few articles in the set are written for parents, e.g., *Day Care*, *Preparatory Schools*.

The set is prepared by educators and subject specialists, 47 of them new to this edition, who either wrote the articles or reviewed staff-written articles. Its specific entries on relatively narrow topics are well illustrated and presented in an attractive format and in language easily comprehended by elementary school children. Each article is written at a level matched to the grade level where the subject is introduced.

The 1987 edition reflects the publisher's awareness of changes in school curricula and children's interests. Nearly 1,000 pages (almost 10 percent of the entire set) were revised for this edition. Twenty-one new and 29 replacement articles were added, and 313 articles were revised. In addition, 113 new entries were added to the "Dictionary Index," and 352 entries were revised. (The "Dictionary Index" consists of very brief entries or definitions for subjects that don't appear in the body of the set but are interfiled in the indexes at the end of each volume. Among the encyclopedias reviewed here, *Compton's* is the only other set that has such an index.)

Among the new articles added to the text in 1987 are *Arctic*; *Dandelions*; *Disney, Walt*; *Karachi*; and *Porcupines*. A new series of articles on each of the major body systems is being added to *NBK* and the first of these—*Digestive System*—appears in this edition. The articles on each of the 12 months of the year, along with *Doctor*, *Knitting*, and *Money*, were among those replaced (meaning totally rewritten). The material covered previously under the title *Jews and Judaism* is now treated in two separate articles. Results of the gubernatorial and senatorial elections of November 1986 are included. (*NBK* is unique in that it has biographical entries for all governors and senators.) Among the articles with major revisions are *Israel*, *Libya*, *Dinosaurs*, *Baby*, and *Optical Illusion*. Examples of entries added to the "Dictionary Index" for the first time are *Artificial Intelligence*; *Joel, Billy*; *Mandela, Nelson*; *Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS)*; *Surrogate Mother*; *Turner, Tina*; and *Zapping*. Undoubtedly some of these topics eventually will find a permanent place in the text of *NBK*; others will be dropped as they fade from interest. Corazon Aquino is still found only in the "Dictionary Index"; by now, she is probably deserving of her own article in the text. *NBK* has been criticized in the past for its failure to have an entry for homosexuality. An excellent paragraph on this topic has been added to the "Dictionary Index." In general it is difficult to find a place

where *NBK's* information is not up-to-date. One hint that a few articles need to be revised is the use of the word *Negro* in the articles *Slavery* and *Buchanan, James*. The article *Dinosaurs* should be updated to note that the *Brontosaurus* is now known as *Apatosaurus*.

As befitting an encyclopedia for children, about one-third of the page space in *NBK* is devoted to illustrations. A high proportion of these are four-color photographs, and about 95 percent of all the illustrations use at least two colors. In this new edition, there are 516 new illustrations, 508 of them in color. There are brighter, livelier illustrations in *Armor* and *Knights and Knighthood*. Seven new maps have been added, such as one for the new *Arctic* article. Graphics for *Aerodynamics* are clearer, including a computer-generated picture. *NBK* is printed in large type that will be easy for children to read.

Some articles in *NBK* end with *see also* references. Other articles contain study boxes set off from the article that contain such references. For the first time, this edition also includes some study boxes with references to entries in the "Dictionary Index." For instance, the article *Basketball* has a study box containing the names of all basketball players who have brief entries in the "Dictionary Index."

Bibliographies do not appear at the ends of articles but rather in a separate paperbound volume entitled *Home and School Reading and Study Guides* that is included with the set. Its first section is a selected list of books for children at all reading levels—primary (K-4), intermediate (grades 5-8), and advanced (grade 9 and up). Topics are arranged alphabetically as they appear in *NBK*. The *Reading Guide* is not intended to be a buying list for libraries; rather, its function is to direct children to titles that are fairly recent and readily available. The bibliographies contain many titles published in the 1980s. There are no references from the encyclopedia to this supplementary volume. The *Study Guide*, a separate unit, is directed to parent and teacher. It suggests ways in which children can be helped both in learning opportunities at home and in schoolwork. It includes listings of hobbies and leisure activities, literary selections, and projects and experiments that can be found in *NBK*.

*NBK* has indexes at the end of each volume (another feature found only here and in *Compton's*) and a cumulative index volume. The indexes have been designed to be easy for children to use. For instance, all index references to illustrations say "picture" instead of the more common, but less clear to children, "illus."



*The New Book of Knowledge* continues to maintain its high standards of reliability, currentness, accessibility, and design in effectively meeting the reference needs of elementary school children.

**The new encyclopaedia Britannica.** 32v. 15th ed. Philip W. Goetz, editor in chief. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 310 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60604. 1987. (last full review in *RBB*, November 15, 1985)

The 1987 *New Encyclopaedia Britannica* maintains its position as described by the *RBB* Board as "the most scholarly English-language encyclopedia available in terms of coverage and style." To some extent, *Britannica's* status derives from its long history, the first edition having been published in 1768 in Edinburgh as a three-volume "dictionary of the arts and sciences." Since 1901, the encyclopedia has been produced in America. Its unique structure distinguishes it from the other encyclopedias in this survey. In 1974 the fifteenth edition, also known as *Britannica 3*, was published in 30 volumes. Entirely rewritten and based on the contributions of more than 4,000 scholars from 131 countries, it was the subject of much debate because of its radically different tripartite arrangement. It was also criticized for the lack of a detailed index. The restructuring that occurred in 1985 resulted in an index and extensive revisions in text and format. The 1987 printing carries forward the direction established in 1985, featuring further expansion of the index and substantial revision in content. Forty-six new contributors with expertise that ranges over subjects as diverse as digestion, Nietzsche, Greek dramatists, and population have been added.

The three major parts of *Britannica* are the *Propaedia*, the *Micropaedia*, and the *Macropaedia*. The one-volume *Propaedia* presents the "Outline of Knowledge," the detailed classification scheme around which the fifteenth edition is structured. It is also a study guide, providing lists of related articles and biographies that are found in the other volumes. The *Micropaedia*, the part that is closest in style to other encyclopedias, contains about 65,000 relatively short, unsigned, factual articles in 12 volumes. It has more than 15,000 illustrations, usually small but clear, about half of which are in color. The *Macropaedia*, in 17 volumes, provides long, comprehensive articles on 581 broad subjects plus detailed biographies of 100 persons selected for inclusion because they profoundly influenced world history. In addition to its more than 8,000 illustrations (generally larger than those found in the *Micropaedia*), the *Macropaedia* includes 162 color insert plates.

The two-volume index provides in-depth access to *Britannica's* vast amount of information and links the separate parts of the encyclopedia by references such as "major ref. in" for *Macropaedia* entries; "for a list of related subjects see *Propaedia*"; and "see *Britannica World Data* for statistical information." Finally, *Britannica World Data* provides a new method for ensuring that "geographic, demographic, economic, and financial data" for 220 countries and dependencies of the world are as up-to-date as possible. Bound with the *Britannica Book of the Year* and given to first-time purchasers of the set, references to it occur in the text of articles as well as the index.

About 3,300 text pages, approximately 12 percent of the whole, have been revised for the 1987 printing. General outlines in six sections of the *Propaedia* have been revised to reflect changes in the content of *Macropaedia* articles, and the reading lists have been updated to reflect new articles in the *Micropaedia*. In the *Macropaedia*, *Classical Scholarship* is an entirely new entry, and 33 other articles have new texts. Among the rewritten articles on important current issues are *The Islamic World*, *Exercise and Physical Conditioning*, and *Drugs and Drug Action*. Each new article provides an assessment of current scholarship and is supported by an excellent, briefly annotated bibliography. Sixty-seven articles have been partially revised, and, in addition, information on 30 countries has been updated. For example, *Childhood Diseases* has been revised extensively to include comment on child abuse, sudden infant death syndrome, psychological disorders, and adolescence. The article *Lebanon* reflects recent political developments. Updated bibliographies accompany these articles. The authoritative, 100-page article *The Solar System* now includes a brief note on the discoveries made by *Voyager 2* concerning the planet Uranus. The *Macropaedia*, with its long, sometimes book-length articles, remains a splendid resource for libraries or the committed independent learner. Some articles, however, have been little changed since 1974 and bibliographies are in serious need of review (e.g., *Nutrition*, *Blood*, and *Cells*).

When an article in the *Macropaedia* is changed, related entries in other parts of the encyclopedia also must be treated. Entries such as *Italian Literature* or *Population* that appear in both the *Micropaedia* and the *Macropaedia* are revised in both places; narrower subjects mentioned within *Macropaedia* articles that also appear as separate *Micropaedia* articles are also revised. For example, the *Macropaedia* article *Time* has been revised, so there are the new *Micropaedia* articles *Dynamical Time* and *Time Zone* along with revised entries for *Atomic*



*Time, Ephemeris Time, and Solar Time.* In the *Micropaedia*, 190 articles are new, 681 existing articles have been heavily revised, and obituary information, corrections, and other small changes have been made to 549 more. Almost half of the new and revised articles are biographical, on modern sports and entertainment figures (Boris Becker, Yul Brynner), scholars and Nobel Prize winners (Maria Gaetana Agnesi, Michael S. Brown), and figures from the classical world (Asclepiogenia, Gaius Cassius). These additions build on a particular strength of the *Britannica*, which has substantially more biographical entries than its competitors. Considerable attention has also been given to health and medicine, including entries such as *Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome*, *Interleukin*, *Obsessive Compulsive Disorders*, and *Nuclear Medicine*. The *Britannica* does not add bibliographies to *Micropaedia* articles (apart from some biographical articles). Seeking further references via the *Macropaedia* can be complicated. In this, *Britannica* differs markedly from other alphabetically arranged encyclopedias, and it is for this reason that it is not always the preferred choice among undergraduates doing term papers.

In 1987, the index has been expanded by 62 pages and now contains 405,553 entries. The index has made the existence of two alphabetical sequences in the set less of a problem.

In summary, the Board reaffirms its earlier finding that the restructured *New Encyclopaedia Britannica* is immensely improved. The program of revision appears thorough and balanced. Apart from some articles in the *Macropaedia*, its currency is excellent, *Britannica World Data* in particular being an effective updating device. *Britannica's* authority remains unquestioned, and its unique, self-contained system provides access to a vast amount of clearly presented information for serious readers of high school and college age and adults.

**New Standard encyclopedia.** 17v. Douglas W. Downey, editor. Standard Educational Corp., 200 W. Monroe, Chicago, IL 60606. 1987. (last full review in *RBB*, October 1, 1987)

A history of what is today the *New Standard Encyclopedia*, now in its ninety-second printing, appears in the Board's most recent comprehensive review of the set. In that review, the Board notes as *New Standard's* strengths its brief, factual treatment of North American biographical and geographical topics and its clear, elementary explanations of scientific and technical phenomena. The Board's examination

of *New Standard* leads us to support its editors' claim that "although children as young as nine or ten can understand much of the material, the content is not juvenile and the level of detail is sufficient for basic reference use by persons of any age."

*New Standard* follows a policy of continuous revision in which "between 10 and 30 percent of the pages are open for revision" annually. Articles on Ansel Adams, bulimia, hospice, Yo-Yo Ma, microwave ovens, Muammar al-Qaddafi, William Rehnquist, Reye's syndrome, Pete Rose, and video camera are among those new to this printing. The editors describe the past year's revision as "a housekeeping revision—normal updating with no major projects" with changes on about 20 percent of the pages to allow themselves "breathing room for the major revision" in the 1988 set, where more than one-quarter of the pages will have some revision.

An in-house editorial staff writes and revises most of the articles in the encyclopedia. New and substantially revised articles are sent out for review to authorities from a pool of approximately 700, 32 of whom are new this year. They are listed in volume 1 with their institutional affiliations and the list of articles they reviewed. The articles themselves are not signed.

*New Standard's* practice of using very specific entries results in numerous short articles on narrow topics. Since the set emphasizes fact rather than interpretation, subjects can be treated adequately in short articles. *New Standard* is unique among the encyclopedias reviewed here in that it has no separate index volume. Instead, the index is embedded into the alphabetical sequence of entries and in the articles themselves. This self-indexing employs several techniques to guide users to related articles. *See* references in boldface are integrated into the alphabetical arrangement. There are approximately three *see* references to every four articles. *See also* references and *for further information*, *see* references lead to related articles. Following major articles, numerous *for further information*, *see* references are classified in order to indicate the "types of related articles," e.g., biographies, history, etc. In a few instances, *New Standard* resorts to traditional indexes. The *Painting* article includes an index of reproductions of paintings elsewhere in the set, and the state maps all have gazetteers.

The 1987 *New Standard* includes 37 new articles, 37 rewritten articles, and 149 that were extensively revised. Rewritten articles include *Aardvark*, *Cicada*, *Dolphin*, *Quality Control*, and *Voodoo*. The revised articles include *Analgesic*, *Burundi*, *Faucets*, *Homosexuality*, *Mental Retardation*, *Terrorism*, and *Uranus*. Approximately 1,425 other arti-



cles of the set's total of 17,356 have been updated for this printing. The most recently updated are those on the Democratic and Republican parties, revised in November 1986. Neither article discusses the Congressional elections of last fall; however, each includes a chart showing the party's possession of the White House and of majorities in the House and Senate from the party's inception through January 1989, when terms of the current Congress and president expire. In nonelection years, the last item updated by *New Standard* is usually the *Baseball* article, to add the winner of the World Series. Lists of winners in the 1987 set include the 1985 Oscar for best picture, 1985 Nobel Prizes, the 1986 Newbery Medal, and the 1985 Super Bowl. Of persons treated in the set who died during 1986, Henry Moore and Jorge Luis Borges died after the volumes in which they are treated were revised. However, John Ciardi's death is noted in his article.

When it is a matter of changing a fact, updating is thorough. If updating requires more than that, however, the results are inconsistent. The article *Atomic Energy* includes two sentences about the Chernobyl disaster of April 1986. The article *Lebanon* says nothing about the situation there since Israel withdrew in 1985—neither about the barracks of U.S. Marines being blown up nor about hostages. In contrast, the article *Libya* concludes with a paragraph about the U.S. air strike. The article *Philippines* mentions Corazon Aquino's electoral victory in early 1986 but not Marcos' exile nor the strength of his loyalists. One can learn of the *Challenger* disaster from the final sentence of the articles *Space Exploration* and *Space Shuttle*. The latter article does not explain how the accident occurred. Only at the end of the article *United States: History* does one learn that the shuttle program was put on hold as a result of that fatal flight.

A factual approach is taken to controversial subjects such as abortion, nuclear power, and AIDS. The *Capital Punishment* article very briefly summarizes the arguments for and against this practice and traces trends in the U.S. during the past 40 years.

Illustrations are vital in an encyclopedia intended for use by young people. *New Standard's* drawings illustrating technical processes and natural phenomena are clear. Exclusive of maps, 158 illustrations were revised for this printing, approximately 275 were dropped, and 273 were added, 105 in full color. Among the new color illustrations are those in the articles *Chile*, *Fog*, *Guinea Pig*, *Jesus*, *Nile River*, *Seattle*, and *Time*. The colorplates in *Flag* are new. In some articles, notably *Philippines* and *Atomic Energy*, new illustrations and their captions have been used to update information. Throughout, illustrations and

their captions and the text reinforce one another. Minor inconsistencies in updating of text are sometimes evident in the photographs. On the whole, however, *New Standard's* 12,000 illustrations are appropriate, attractive, and informative.

*New Standard* offers readers opportunities to learn more about a topic through bibliographies of books, mostly from the 1970s and 1980s, at the end of articles. Of *New Standard's* approximately 1,000 bibliographies, 196 have been updated for this printing. Some lists differentiate between adult books and books for younger readers, defined as "primarily those in grades 4-8." In some cases the absence of a bibliography is a serious omission, as in the case of the articles *AIDS*, *International Trade*, and *Nicaragua*. These are just the sort of topics readers will want to know more about.

The *New Standard Encyclopedia* continues to be a reliable source of current, concise treatments of a broad range of topics of interest to North American readers from the middle grades through the adult level. Its emphasis is on factual information, and it presents that information accurately and objectively.

**The world book encyclopedia.** 22v. [William H. Nault, publisher; Robert O. Zeleny, editor in chief.] World Book, Inc., 510 Merchandise Mart Plaza, Chicago, IL 60654. 1987. (last full review in *RBB*, February 1, 1984)

*The World Book Encyclopedia* was first published in 1917 as an eight-volume set. Now, 70 years later, it is firmly established as one of the most useful and accurate encyclopedias for school, library, and home use. The set is produced by an editorial staff and more than 3,000 contributors under the guidance of a distinguished advisory board and six consultant committees in specialized fields. All articles are signed but do not indicate whether the person wrote the article or only reviewed the work of others. The credentials of the authors are given in volume 1. The Board's last full review of *World Book* acclaimed its "high degree of accuracy—typographically, factually, and in matters of interpretation."

The set is designed for use by elementary, junior high, and high school students, but it also serves well as a general reference tool for teachers, librarians, and other adults. It is logically organized and easy to use. The 1987 edition has more than 18,000 entries arranged alphabetically in the first 21 volumes. In the text, there are more than



8,000 cross-reference entries plus related article listings at the close of many entries. Volume 22, the *Research Guide/Index*, has more than 150,000 entries. The articles are of varying length and vocabulary level, depending on the needs of the subject and the anticipated audience for that topic.

*World Book's* illustrations are particularly strong. There are 29,000 photographs, drawings, diagrams, charts, and maps that occupy one-third of the page space, and half of them are in color. The articles frequently include features such as facts in brief, tables of terms or important dates, pronunciation guides, outlines, study questions, and lists of additional resources.

*World Book* has long had an intensive continuous revision program. The 1987 edition has once again succeeded in including enough changes to keep the set current. Articles on countries include not only the latest official population but also 1987 and 1992 estimates. World figures who died before printing began in August 1986 have their deaths noted in their biographies (e.g., Henry Moore, James Eastland, Simone de Beauvoir). Winners of the 1985 Oscars (given in 1986), the 1986 Newbery Award, and the 1986 Pulitzer Prizes are noted, as are 1986 sports winners such as the Montreal Canadiens in the Stanley Cup, Becker and Navratilova at Wimbledon, and the New York Mets in the World Series. On the political front, Corazon Aquino's rise to power in the Philippines is covered, along with the overthrow of Duvalier in Haiti and Warren Burger's resignation from the U.S. Supreme Court.

There are 30 new articles this year; many are scientific or medical (*Artificial Heart, Chelation Therapy, Cyclosporine, Endometriosis, Magellanic Clouds*). There is the new entry *National Laboratory*, and three of those laboratories have their own entries for the first time (*Idaho National Engineering Laboratory, Los Alamos National Laboratory, and Sandia National Laboratories*). Other new entries range from *KGB, Tofu, and America's Cup* to *Unicycle*. The 13 new biographies include eight Americans and three women. Many are of contemporary figures (Corazon Aquino, Antonin Scalia, Stephen King, Bruce Springsteen), but there are also new articles on Isambard Brunel, a nineteenth-century British engineer, and Moses Mendelssohn, an eighteenth-century philosopher.

One hundred sixty-one articles have been completely rewritten. *Civil War, World War I, and World War II* have been rewritten by new authors and given new, improved illustrations. The articles *Astronaut* and *National Aeronautics and Space Administration* have been com-

pletely revised. The entry *AIDS* has been expanded to reflect the increased knowledge of and interest in that topic. *Streetcar* has been updated from a purely historical entry to one that also discusses and pictures modern streetcars. New illustrations include a foldout to commemorate the bicentennial of the signing of the U.S. Constitution and a photograph of a 1987 model Chevrolet.

A sampling of remaining articles indicates the level of partial revision of an additional 1,025 articles. Many of the articles on countries include events of 1985 and 1986. Prince Andrew's wedding is mentioned in the article on Queen Elizabeth; Robert Penn Warren's appointment as first poet laureate of the U.S. is covered; but Brazil's change in currency from the cruzeiro to the cruzado is not noted. More than 140 bibliographies at the ends of articles were revised, and they have a good representation of 1984 and 1985 titles. Bibliographies also were added to 14 articles that did not have them in previous editions. The index volume also contains bibliographies as part of the more than 200 "Reading and Study Guides." A total of 2,393 pages, or about 17 percent of the text pages, have had some changes in the 1987 edition.

The level of revision for the 1987 edition is somewhat lower than in previous years, but the set is still admirably current. *The World Book Encyclopedia* remains an accurate, authoritative, easy-to-use encyclopedia that successfully fulfills its stated purpose of meeting the reference needs of students, teachers, librarians, and the general public.



# Encyclopedia Summary Chart 1987

Encyclopedia	Approx. No. of Entries; Excl. Cross-References	No. of Pages	Approx. No. of Illus.	Consumer Price	School and Library Price 1987	School and Library Price 1988
Academic American Encyclopedia 21v.	28,600	9,744	16,650	\$850 + shipping & handling	\$650 + shipping & handling	\$700 + shipping & handling
Collier's Encyclopedia 24v.	25,000	19,750	17,600	\$1,399.50; \$1,699.50 with Collier's Home Educational Program	\$739 + \$20 shipping & handling	\$849 + \$20 shipping & handling
Compton's Encyclopedia and Fact-Index 26v.	4,300 + 34,000 Fact-Index entries	10,200	22,500	\$699	\$525; \$495 for two or more sets	\$539
The Encyclopedia Americana 30v.	52,000	26,965	22,652	\$1,250 + shipping & handling	\$869 + shipping & handling	\$889 + shipping & handling
Funk & Wagnalls New Encyclopedia 29v.	25,000	13,024	9,154	\$139.81 during Fall 1987—Spring 1988	\$140	\$140
Merit Students Encyclopedia 20v.	21,000	12,300	20,000	\$1,399.50; \$1,699.50 with Merit Students Home Educational Program (1986 & 1987)	\$509 + \$16 shipping	\$559 + \$20 shipping
The New Book of Knowledge 21v.	4,352 & 4,650 Dictionary Index entries	10,076	22,500	\$850 + shipping & handling	\$529.50 + shipping & handling	\$549.50 + shipping & handling
The New Encyclopedia Britannica 32v.	65,000 in Micropaedia, 681 in Macropaedia	32,327	24,000	\$1,299	\$1,049 + \$25.30 shipping & handling	\$1,069 + \$25.30 shipping & handling
New Standard Encyclopedia 17v.	17,356	10,023	12,000	\$669.50	\$499.50 + \$20 shipping & handling; library distribution price available first of year	Same as 1987
The World Book Encyclopedia 22v.	18,100	14,056	29,000	\$549 standard binding; \$599 aristocrat binding; \$599 classical binding; + \$29 shipping & handling	\$470 + \$29 shipping & handling	\$520 + \$29 shipping & handling

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